

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A scanner apparatus for scanning paper documents, of the type comprising a first device for scanning bank cheques, wherein the first device includes:

a first input receptacle (11) for receiving at least one cheque to be scanned,

at least one first image-scanner unit (25, 26) for scanning at least one of the faces of the cheque,

a first output receptacle (27) for receiving the cheque after it has been scanned by the first scanner unit, and

a first conveyor mechanism (15, 16, 17, 23) for conveying cheques, one at a time, from the first input receptacle (11) to the first output receptacle (27), passing in front of the first scanner unit,

the apparatus further comprising a second device for scanning other paper documents (D), wherein the second device includes:

a second input receptacle (28) for receiving at least one paper document (D) to be scanned,

at least one second image-scanner unit (41) for scanning at least one of the faces of the paper document,

at least one second output receptacle (44, 50) for receiving the paper document after it has been scanned by the second scanner unit (41),

- a second conveyor mechanism (37, 38, 42, 43) for conveying paper documents, one at a time, from the second input receptacle (28) to the second output receptacle (44, 50), passing in front of the second scanner unit (41).

2. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 1, comprising an outer casing (10) containing the first scanning device and the second scanning device, and for the second input receptacle (28), the outer casing (10) has an input slot

(29) for the said paper documents (D) which has a width of at least 210 mm.

3. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 1, comprising an electronic control unit (ECU) which is connected to the first image-scanner unit (25, 26) of the first device in order to receive signals relating to the scanning of cheques from the first unit, and to the second image-scanner unit (41) in order to receive signals relating to the scanning of the other paper documents (D) from the second unit.

4. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the electronic control unit (ECU) is also operatively connected to:

- photocell means (14) for detecting the presence of at least one cheque in the first input receptacle (11) of the first scanning device,
- drive/actuator means (15, 16) of the first conveyor mechanism for picking up at least one cheque from the first input receptacle (11) and conveying the cheque to the first output receptacle (27), passing in front of the first scanning unit (25, 26);
- photocell means (30) for detecting the presence of at least one document (D) in the second input receptacle (28) of the second scanning device,
- drive/actuator means (31) of the first conveyor mechanism for picking up at least one document (D) from the second input receptacle (28) and conveying (37, 38; 42, 43; 48, 49) the document to a second output receptacle (44, 50), passing in front of the second scanner unit (41).

5. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 3, comprising one single USB or Ethernet serial communication bus operatively connected to the electronic control unit (ECU) in order to

transmit to the exterior the scanning data coming from all of the scanner units (25, 26, 41) of the apparatus.

6. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the second device for scanning paper documents (D) is housed in the lower portion of the casing (10) and in that the first scanning device is disposed in the upper portion of the casing (10).

7. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the second scanning device comprises an input receptacle (28) for paper documents (D), situated on a first side of the casing (10), and an output receptacle (44) disposed on a second side of the casing (10) opposite the first side.

8. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the second scanning device comprises a further output receptacle (50) situated on the same, first side of the casing.

9. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the second device for scanning paper documents (D) is arranged selectively to perform scanning of only one face or of both faces of the document.

10. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 9, wherein:

- the second image-scanner unit (41) is mounted so as to be rotatable (45) about an axis perpendicular to the path of movement (47) of the document in order to be able to adopt a first angular position in which it is situated on one side of the path in order to scan one face of a document (D) and a second angular position (41') to which it is rotated from the first and in which it is situated on the opposite side of the path in order to scan the opposite face of the document (D),

- and wherein the second conveyor mechanism comprises a pair of motor-driven rollers (42, 43) which can be rotated selectively and alternatively in two opposite directions of rotation in order to move a document (D) in one direction or in the opposite direction.

11. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the pair of motor-driven rollers (42, 43) is interposed between the second, rotatable scanner unit (41, 45) and an output receptacle (44) for receiving the documents (D).

12. A scanner apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the second, rotatable scanner unit (41, 45) is interposed between the pair of motor-driven rollers (42, 43) and a deflector means (40) which can permit the movement of a document (D) from the second input receptacle (28) to the second scanner unit (41, 45) along a first path (47) and can deflect the document along a deflected path towards a further output receptacle (50) when the document (D) is moving in said opposite direction.